

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 SAM-01 ACDA-19 CU-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 NIC-01 DRC-01

EB-11 OMB-01 /180 W

----- 087208

R 101200Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6785

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 5590/1

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PGOV TS

SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA SPEAKS ON THE EVE OF THE PARTY
CONGRESS

1. SUMMARY: BORUGUIBA'S SEPT 8 INTERVIEW IN LE MONDE
MAKES IT OFFICIAL THAT HE WILL BE NAMED PRESIDENT FOR
LIFE, AND THAT THE COMING DESTOURIAN SOCIALIST PARTY
(PSD) CONGRESS WILL ERASE THE "ERRORS" MADE AT (AND
INDEED THE VERY EXISTENCE OF) THE 1971 CONGRESS.
BOURGUIBA ALSO NOTES THAT THERE NO NEED FOR ANY OTHER
PARTY BUT PSD, AND THAT STUDENT DISAFFECTION FROM THE
REGIME IS NOT RPT NOT A PROBLEM. ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HE SHOWS PIQUE AT LIBYA, AGAIN SPEAKS OF THE GAP
BETWEEN GOT AND MOROCCO RE SPANISH SAHARA, AND STICKS
TO HIS LINE THAT THE 1947 PARTITION RESOLUTION IS THE KEY
TO AN ARAB/ISRAELI SETTLEMENT. END SUMMARY.

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2. IN HIS USUAL, FRANK MANNER BOURGUIBA SAID HE WOULD

ACCEPT THE OFFER (PRESUMABLY TO BE MADE AT MONASTIR LATER THIS WEEK) TO BE ELECTED PRESIDENT FOR LIFE. "I HAVE BEEN TOURING THE COUNTRY: THE PEOPLE CAN'T IMAGINE THAT I COULD DIE ONE DAY. AS THE FOUNDER OF THIS COUNTRY, THIS (THE OFFER OF LIFE PRESIDENCY) ON THE PART OF MY COMPATRIOTS IS A GESTURE OF RECOGNITION MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. IT WAS THE SAME WAY WITH TITO. BUT WHEN THE DAY COMES WHEN I CANNOT DO MY JOB I WILL OF COURSE TURN OVER MY RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PRIME MINISTER."

3. THE COMING CONGRESS, SAID BOURGUIBA, WILL TAKE MEASURES TO ASSURE MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY BY REVISING THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY. "I WILL INSIST THAT THE PARTY PRESIDENT CHOOSE THE POLITICAL BUREAU FROM AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. IT IS I, IS IT NOT, WHO OUGHT TO PICK MY COLLABORATORS." BUT THE MAIN THRUST OF THIS YEAR'S CONGRESS WILL BE TO ERASE THE RESULTS OF THE 1971 CONGRESS. IN 1971 "THEY THOUGHT THAT THE MOMENT HAD COME TO PUT AN END TO BOURGUIBA'S PRESIDENCY, TO RELEGATE HIM TO THE BACK ROW... AND THEN THERE WAS HAGGLING, BUYING OF VOTES, ...THIS IS WHY I DECIDED THAT THE NEW CONGRESS SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN THE SAME CITY. IN FACT, THE LAST REGULAR CONGRESS WAS THAT OF BIZERTE IN 1964."

4. ASKED WHETHER HE DID NOT THINK TUNISIANS HAD REACHED SUCH A DEGREE OF POLITICAL MATURITY AS TO PERMIT THE EXISTENCE OF MORE THAN ONE POLITICAL PARTY, BOURGUIBA POINTED OUT THAT THE CONSTITUTION DOES NOT PREVENT MULTIPLE PARTIES. BUT HE WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT THE PSD, ALONE, HAD WON INDEPENDENCE, AND SINCE THE PSD IS OPEN TO ALL AND DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY PARTICULAR CLASS, AND BECAUSE IT WORKS TO BE THE PARTY OF THE NATION, "THERE IS NO REASON FOR THERE TO BE ANY OTHERS."

5. WITH REGARD TO THE RECENT STATE SECURITY COURT TRIAL OF YOUNG PEOPLE, BOURGUIBA SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WAS LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE IN IT. "BELIEVE ME, I GET LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AROUND IN TUNISIA, AND I SEE YOUNG PEOPLE... I RECEIVED SOME OF THEM AND SAID, "WHY DID YOU DO IT? IF THERE IS ANYONE TO WHOM YOU OWE EVERYTHING IT IS THE PRESIDENT. YOU ARE ASKED ONLY TO WORK." OBVIOUSLY, TUNISIA IS A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY. IN OTHER COUNTRIES, THE YOUNG PEOPLE CANNOT MAKE DEMONSTRATIONS OR EVEN SPEAK. WE ARE ONE OF THE RARE COUNTRIES IN WHICH THERE IS A NORMAL, CONSTITUTIONAL LIFE, AND A GOVERNMENT

WHICH IS NOT THE RESULT OF A COUP D'ETAT. WHERE THERE ARE LIBERTIES, THERE ARE ALWAYS EXCESSES, BUT, TRULY, THIS IS NOT SERIOUS."

6. BOURGUIBA WAS ESPECIALLY INTERESTING ON RELATIONS WITH LIBYA. " WE ARE IN PROCESS OF GETTING CLARIFICATIONS FROM MR. QADHAFI NOW, AND SHOULD HAVE THEM WITHIN A FEW DAYS. WE ARE GOING TO FORCE THEM TO CHOOSE. IF DISCUSSIONS ARE ALWAYS FRUITFUL AMONG TECHNICIANS, THEY ARE NONETHELESS BLOCKED AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL, WHICH IS TO SAY THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL. QADHAFI DREAMS OF THE FUSION OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES, SOMETHING WHICH WILL NEVER BE. WE ALREADY HAVE ENOUGH TROUBLE BRINGING TOGETHER THE REGIONS OF A SINGLE COUNTRY... BEGINNING WITH CYRENAICA AND THE FEZZAN. IN ANY CASE, TUNISIA HAS NEED OF NOTHING, WE CAN ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES, OUR PLAN, WITHOUT RECOURSE TO SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS."

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6786

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 TUNIS 5590/2

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PGOV TS

SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA SPEAKS ON THE EVE OF THE PARTY
CONGRESS

7. BOURGUIBA CONFIRMED OUR IMPRESSION THAT HIS RECENT MEETING WITH MOROCCAN PRI MIN OSMAN HAD MADE CLEAR TUNISIA WILL BACK MOROCCO ON THE SPANISH SAHARA QUESTION PROVIDED MOROCCO DOES NOT CONTRAVENE THE UN DECISION ON SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE AREA. HOWEVER HE WENT BEYOND THAT SAYING "IT WOULD BE BETTER (FOR MOROCCO) TO COME TO AGREEMENT WITH MAURITANIA AND TOGETHER CREATE AN ASSOCIATION TO EXPLOIT THE PHOSPHATES OF THE WESTERN SAHARA. IF (MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA) REMAIN DISUNITED, IT WILL BE SPAIN WHICH STAYS...."

8. THE UN 1947 PARTITION PLAN REMAINS FOR BOURGUIBA
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THE KEY TO AN ARAB/ISRAELI SETTLEMENT. BUT "AS FOR THE ISRAELIS, I SAY TO THEM, 'YOU CAN HAVE EITHER TERRITORY OR SECURITY, BUT NOT BOTH. YOU WERE GIVEN MORE THAN 50 PERCENT OF PALESTINE IN 1947. AFTER TEN OR TWENTY YEARS THE ARABS WILL BE STRONGER AND STRONGER, THANKS TO THEIR PETROLEUM, THEIR POPULATION, AND THEIR PROGRESS, AND THEN THEY WILL NOT PERHAPS LEAVE YOU EVEN THAT MUCH.'"

9. COMMENT: THERE IS LITTLE NEW IN THIS TOUR D' HORIZON, BEYOND BOURGUIBA'S OPEN ACCEPTANCE OF THE LIFETIME PRESIDENCY. THE "ERRORS" OF THE 1971 MONASTIR CONFERENCE INCLUDED SUCH "ANARCHISTIC" (HIS WORD) DECISIONS AS THAT PARTY OFFICIALS SHOULD BE ELECTED AT ALL LEVELS, INCLUDING THE POLITICAL BUREAU. (THIS WAS THE MAIN ISSUE WHICH PUT AHMED MESTIRI OUT OF THE HIERARCHY RIGHT AFTER THE 1971 CONGRESS, WHEN HE COMPLAINED TO THE PRESS AGAINST BOURGUIBA'S INSISTENCE ON DESIGNATING HIS POLITBUREAU.) THE PARTY HAS PREPARED FOR A "PROPER" ROLLING BACK TO A LEGITIMATE, AUTHORITARIAN PARTY STRUCTURE BY HAMMERING, ALL SUMMER LONG, THE THEME OF CONSULTATION WITH "THE BASE", THE "DIRECT DIALOGUE WITH THE PEOPLE WHICH IS TRUE DEMOCRACY." WHEN THE CONGRESS, THIS WEEK, APPROVES THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS (AS FEW DOUBT IT WILL DO) IT WILL HAVE HAPPENED AFTER AN UNPRECEDENTED VOLUME OF PUBLIC MEETINGS, THE PUBLICATION WELL IN ADVANCE OF DRAFT DECISIONS FOR THE CONGRESS, AND OTHER MEASURES WHICH WILL BE CITED AS PROVING THAT ONE-MAN RULE IN

TUNISIA IS BY POPULAR DEMAND.

10. BOURGUIBA'S TREATMENT OF THE SECURITY COURT TRIAL
IS STRANGE, GIVEN HIS OWN MUCH MORE SERIOUS VIEW,
EXPRESSED SEVERAL TIMES RECENTLY, OF THE MARXIST-
LENINIST THREAT, FINANCED FROM ABROAD, WHICH THE
DEFENDANTS WERE SAID TO REPRESENT.
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